

Inspector General Community Launches Oversight.gov to Increase Accessibility to Reports

August 15, 2017

On August 2, 2017, the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) launched [Oversight.gov](#), a central repository for Office of Inspector General (OIG) reports that is intended to “improve the public’s access to independent and authoritative information about the Federal Government.” The website is currently being [beta tested](#). As of August 2, 2017, 36 of 73 OIGs were participating in the beta test (**Table 1**). The establishment of, and participation in, the website is not statutorily required.

Oversight.gov is intended to be the first one-stop shop for OIG reports. [Section 8M\(b\)\(1\)](#) of the Inspectors General Act of 1978, as amended, requires all OIG audit, evaluation, or inspection reports to be posted on individual OIG respective websites. Several factors, however, may affect the accessibility and utility of reports on individual OIG websites. For example, OIG reports might be difficult to locate due to varied website layouts and the lack of keyword search functions. Further, it may be difficult to compare report findings and recommendations across OIGs for similar or shared issues, such as [compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act \(FISMA\)](#).

Table 1. OIG Participation in Oversight.gov Beta Test
As of August 14, 2017

| Participating OIGs | Non-participating OIGs |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AbilityOne Commission | Agency for International Development |
| Amtrak | Architect of the Capitol |
| Appalachian Regional Commission | Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau |
| Consumer Product Safety Commission | Central Intelligence Agency |
| Corporation for National & Community Service | Commodity Futures Trading Commission |
| Denali Commission | Corporation for Public Broadcasting |
| Department of Defense | Defense Intelligence Agency |
| Department of Education | Department of Agriculture |
| Department of Energy | Department of Commerce |

| Participating OIGs | Non-participating OIGs |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Department of Homeland Security | Department of Health and Human Services |
| Department of Housing and Urban Development | Department of the Treasury |
| Department of Justice | Equal Employment Opportunity Commission |
| Department of Labor | Farm Credit Administration |
| Department of State and Broadcasting Board of Governors | Federal Communications Commission |
| Department of the Interior | Federal Election Commission |
| Department of Transportation | Federal Housing Finance Agency |
| Department of Veterans Affairs | Federal Labor Relations Authority |
| Election Assistance Commission | Federal Trade Commission |
| Environmental Protection Agency | Government Accountability Office |
| Export-Import Bank | Government Publishing Office |
| Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation | Legal Services Corporation |
| Federal Maritime Commission | Library of Congress |
| General Services Administration | National Archives and Records Administration |
| International Trade Commission | National Endowment for the Arts |
| National Aeronautics and Space Administration | National Endowment for the Humanities |
| National Credit Union Administration | National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency |
| National Science Foundation | National Labor Relations Board |
| Nuclear Regulatory Commission | National Reconnaissance Office |
| Office of Personnel Management | National Security Agency |
| Peace Corps | Office of the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community |
| Small Business Administration | Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation |
| Smithsonian Institution | Postal Regulatory Commission |
| Social Security Administration | U.S. Railroad Retirement Board |
| Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction | U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission |
| | Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program |

Source: Oversight.gov and <https://www.ignet.gov/content/inspectors-general-directory>.

Content of Oversight.gov

Reports

Oversight.gov currently features a database of [reports](#) authored by participating OIGs from 2000 through the present, including audits, inspections/evaluations, investigations, semiannual reports, and other reviews. All reports are uploaded directly by the authoring OIG. A notable feature of the website is the search function—users can generate a customized list of reports based on multiple data elements, such as the agency OIG, report type, or keyword (**Figure 1**). Customized searches are not typically available on individual OIG websites.

Oversight.gov also provides a standard [data summary](#) for each posted report that includes, among other things (1) the number of OIG recommendations; (2) “[Questioned costs](#),” or total agency costs questioned by the OIG; and (3) “[Funds for Better Use](#),” or potential cost savings/avoidances anticipated upon implementing OIG recommendations.

Aggregate Data

In addition to reports, Oversight.gov includes graphics of aggregate data on OIG audits and investigations. Some graphics include community-wide data, whereas others include data from participating OIGs only. For example, the [investigations](#) tab depicts the total number of successful criminal prosecutions that resulted from *all* OIG investigations between FY2011 and FY2015 (as reported in CIGIE’s [Annual Report to the President](#)). In contrast, the [reports](#) tab appears to depict the total number of *participating* OIG recommendations from FY2012 to FY2017.

OIG Open Recommendations

At present, Oversight.gov does not include a database of open recommendations—those that have not been adopted or implemented by the affiliated agency. OIG semiannual reports, which are posted on the website, are [statutorily required](#) to include information on some, but not all, open recommendations. The Department of Justice OIG uploaded to Oversight.gov a separate [annual compendium](#) of open Department of Justice OIG recommendations. Other OIGs have published similar reports, but have not uploaded them to the website (e.g., [Department of Defense](#)) or are not yet participating in the beta test (e.g., [Department of Health & Human Services](#)).

Figure 1. Oversight.gov Search Functions for OIG Reports
As of August 14, 2017

Inspector General Reports

| Report Date | Agency Reviewed/Investigated | Title | Type | Location |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| 08/10/2017 | Department of Justice | Victim Assistance and Victim Compensation Formula Grants Awarded to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs | Audit | MN, US |
| 08/10/2017 | United States Postal Service OIG | Delayed Mail Validation | Audit | US |
| 08/10/2017 | Department of Veterans Affairs | Inspection of the VA Regional Office New Orleans, Louisiana | Inspection / Evaluation | LA, US |
| 08/10/2017 | Department of Veterans Affairs | Inspection of the VA Regional Office Atlanta, Georgia | Inspection / Evaluation | GA, US |
| 08/10/2017 | Department of Veterans Affairs | Review of Alleged Failure of the National Work Queue To Perform in Production | Audit | US |
| 08/09/2017 | Environmental Protection Agency | Management Alert: Concerns Over Compliance, Accountability and Consistency Identified With EPA's Biweekly Pay Cap Waiver Process | Audit | US |
| 08/09/2017 | Export-Import Bank Office of Inspector General | 2012, Oct 1-OIG_Report_Spring_2013_Final508b-and-Mgmt-Ltr-Pt-2 | Semiannual Report | Agency-Wide |
| 08/09/2017 | Export-Import Bank Office of Inspector General | 2012, April 1-SARC-Web-Post | Semiannual Report | Agency-Wide |
| 08/09/2017 | Export-Import Bank Office of Inspector General | 2013, Oct 1-OIG_Report_Spring14_final_508 | Semiannual Report | Agency-Wide |
| 08/09/2017 | Export-Import Bank Office of Inspector General | 2014, April 4-OIG_Report_FA_Final_508 | Semiannual Report | Agency-Wide |

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ... next last
Displaying 1 - 10 of 3120

Filter Options

Use the control below to filter the list of Inspector General reports. Click on the heading to view the filter choices.

Current Filter:
• Country • US

► Date Range

► Report Location

▼ Report Type

Select multiple items by holding CONTROL or SHIFT keys while clicking.

select the type to filter

Audit
CIGIE Report
Inspection / Evaluation
Investigation

▼ OIG

Select multiple items by holding CONTROL or SHIFT keys while clicking.

select the submitting OIG to filter

AbilityOne Office of Inspector General
Amtrak (National Railroad Passenger Corp
Appalachian Regional Commission OIG
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserv

► Report Number

► Keywords

Show me: 10 reports at a time

Source: Oversight.gov/reports.

Recent Congressional Actions on OIG Report Transparency

In recent years, Congress has taken steps to enhance the transparency and oversight of OIG reports, particularly recommendations. Most notably, Congress passed the [IG Empowerment Act of 2016](#), which requires OIGs to, among other things, submit to Congress all documents containing recommendations and post such documents on their respective websites. Some Members of Congress have also proposed establishing repositories of open recommendations. Senator Heidi Heitkamp introduced the Inspector General Recommendation Transparency Act (S. 3109) in the 114th Congress, which proposed requiring federal IGs to post on their websites a list of recommendations “that [have] not been adopted or implemented” by the affiliated agency.

Possible Oversight Issues

As CIGIE continues to build out Oversight.gov, Congress might consider the following oversight issues:

- the pace of CIGIE’s progress in completing Oversight.gov, including the projected completion timeframe; anticipated capabilities of the final website; and incorporation of suggestions to alter the content of structure of the beta website;
- which of the remaining 37 OIGs will join the Oversight.com beta test, and whether legislation should require OIG participation on the finalized website;
- whether, and in what capacity, the website will include an open recommendations database, including how it might compare to the [Government Accountability Office \(GAO\) open recommendations database](#);
- the utility of the website to Congress and its impact on oversight of OIG activities;
- the utility of the website to OIGs, including the extent to which it could simplify or automate certain activities—such as the development of semiannual reports—and allow OIGs to redirect resources to other activities; and
- the quality and accuracy of data presented, as well as the capacity of, and coordination between, CIGIE and OIGs to maintain website content.

Acknowledgments

The original author of this Insight is former CRS analyst Kathryn A. Francis.

Author Information

Ben Wilhelm
Analyst in Government Organization and Management

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS’s institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.